

## **Michigan and U.S. Agricultural Exports**

**Grade Level: 4-6**

**Approximate Length of Activity: One class period**

### **Objectives:**

#### **Teacher:**

1. Help students realize the importance of Michigan's agricultural products.

#### **Students:**

1. Learn the terms import and export.
2. Learn what countries Michigan exports agricultural products do.
3. Use statistics to determine the percentage of Michigan exports.

**Michigan Content Standards: (Math) II.2.2; II.2.5; III.1.1; III.1.2; III.1.3; V.1.2**

### **Introduction:**

Michigan farmers have an important role in supplying safe, fresh food, and farm products to the U.S. and the world. Michigan farmers produce everything from cereal grains, milk, and lean meats to delicious fresh fruits and vegetables.

The U.S. imports and exports many agricultural products. An export is a product that is sold to another country. The U.S. and Michigan export many items including soybeans, corn, wheat, cotton, beef, pork, apples, and grapes. An import is a product that is brought into a nation from a foreign country. The U.S. imports items such as coffee, tea, spices, silk, pineapples, bananas, cane sugar, and fish. Michigan is one of many states that import these products.

This lesson is designed to teach the terms “export” and “import”. It is also designed to illustrate how Michigan is ranked in exporting compared to its size.

### **Materials Needed:**

- “Michigan and U.S. Exports” worksheet
- “Export Information Sheet” worksheet
- Almanac or other resource books

### **Activity Outline:**

1. Begin by discussing the words “import” and “export.” If the students can’t come up with a definition, pass out the “Export Information Sheet” worksheet and read the definitions. Discuss the items they know are imported. Don’t forget to mention cars and electronic goods. Also discuss items that are exported.

2. Ask the students to check the tags or printing on an article of clothing they are wearing and look for the country it was made in. Students may look at shirts, shoes, pants, socks, accessories, or anything else they may be wearing. For students who cannot find an article of clothing that lists the country of origin, you may want to have some belts, vests, or other accessories available for them to borrow.
3. Begin by going around the classroom and asking each student where one article of their clothing was made. Write each person's country on the chalkboard. Keep tallies if more than one article of clothing was made in the same country. When done, ask the students how many countries are on the chalkboard. Then ask them if one country made more than one article of clothing. How many articles of clothing did the country make? How many countries made more than one article of clothing? Discuss why countries are able to produce and export or sell (if made in the U.S.) articles of clothing.
4. Use the "Export Information Sheet" worksheet to answer the questions on "Michigan and the U.S. Exports" worksheet. The 1998 statistics will help you figure out some math facts about Michigan and its importance in agricultural exporting.

**Discussion Questions:**

1. What is an import? Name some products that the U.S. imports.
2. What is an export? Name some products that the U.S. exports and some that Michigan exports.
3. How does Michigan rank in exporting of its agricultural products?

**Related Activities:**

1. The lesson could also be geared to purchases the students make. Most labels tell the origin. They could check their clothes and other belongings to see how many articles are imports.
2. Plot the origin of clothing materials on a map after looking at the tags.

## Michigan & U.S. Agricultural Exports

**Name** \_\_\_\_\_

## Michigan and U.S. Exports

Use the Export Map to Answer the questions below.

1. How many countries buy each of these agricultural products from the United States?

Wheat \_\_\_\_\_

Beef \_\_\_\_\_

Feed Grains \_\_\_\_\_

Pork \_\_\_\_\_

Soybeans and Soy Products \_\_\_\_\_

2. The total U.S. agricultural export sales figure in 1998 was \$53.7 billion. Michigan agricultural exports were \$3.09 billion. What percent of the total U.S. agricultural exports did Michigan sell?
3. The total U.S. export sales for soybeans and products was \$9 billion. Michigan exports 15.6 percent of these soybeans. How much was Michigan's share?
4. The U.S. exported \$53.7 billion in 1998 and imported \$37 billion in agricultural products. What would the trade surplus be? Is this good or bad?



To be used with:

**Michigan & U.S. Agricultural Exports**

**Answer Key**

**Michigan and U.S. Exports**

Use the Export Map to Answer the questions below.

1. How many countries buy each of these agricultural products from the United States?

Wheat 8                      Beef 7

Feed Grains 8              Pork 4

Soybeans and Soy Products 7

2. The total U.S. agricultural export sales figure in 1998 was \$53.7 billion. Michigan agricultural exports were \$3.09 billion. What percent of the total United States agricultural exports did Michigan sell?

$$(3.09 / 53.7) \times 100 = \underline{5.75\%}$$

3. The total U.S. export sales for soybeans and products was \$9 billion. Michigan exports 15.6 percent of these soybeans. How much was Michigan's share?

$$9 \times .156 = \underline{\$1.4 \text{ billion}}$$

4. The U.S. exported \$53.7 billion in 1998 and imported \$37 billion in agricultural products. What would the trade surplus be? Is this good or bad?

$$\underline{\$16.7 \text{ billion surplus; good}}$$

To be used with:

**Michigan & U.S. Agricultural Exports**

Name \_\_\_\_\_

## Export Information Sheet

Michigan has an important role in supplying food and farm products to countries all over the world. As of 1997, Michigan ranked third in the U.S. in the amount of agricultural products we send overseas. Some of the countries that purchase agricultural products from the U.S. and the products they purchase are listed below. Many of these agricultural products are produced in Michigan.

**Export:** To sell a product to another country.

**Import:** To buy a product from another country.

**Canada**

beef

**Mexico**

feed grains  
soybeans  
soy products

**Brazil**

wheat

**European Community**

wheat  
feed grains  
soybeans  
soy products  
beef  
pork

**Egypt**

wheat  
beef

**South Africa**

feed grains

**China**

wheat

**India**

soybeans  
soy products

**Eastern Europe**

wheat  
feed grains  
soybeans  
soy products

**Australia**

wheat  
beef  
feed grains

**Hong Kong**

pork

**New Zealand**

beef

**C.I.S.**

wheat  
feed grains  
soybeans  
soy products  
beef  
pork

**Japan**

feed grains  
soybeans  
soy products  
wheat  
beef  
pork

**Taiwan**

feed grains  
soybeans  
soy products